

A clean environment is important to all of us!

Did you know that storm drains are NOT connected to sanitary sewer systems and treatment plants?

The primary purpose of storm drains is to carry rainwater away from developed areas to prevent flooding. Untreated storm water, and the pollutants it carries, flows directly into creeks, lagoons and the ocean.

In recent years, sources of water pollution, like industrial waters from factories, have been greatly reduced. However, now the majority of water pollution occurs from things like: cars leaking oil; fertilizer's from farms, lawns and gardens; failing septic tanks; pet waste; and residential car washing into the storm drains and into the ocean and waterways.

All these sources add up to a pollution problem! But each of us can do small things to help clean up our water and that adds up to **pollution solution!**

What's the problem with fertilizers and pesticides?

Fertilizer isn't a problem - **IF** it's used carefully. If you use too much fertilizer or apply it at the wrong time, it can easily wash off your lawn or garden into storm drains and then flow untreated into lakes or streams.

Just like in your garden, fertilizer in lagoons and streams makes plants grow. In water bodies, extra fertilizer can mean extra algae and aquatic plant growth. Too much algae harms water quality and makes boating, fishing and swimming unpleasant. As algae decay, they use up oxygen in the water that fish and other wildlife need.

Fertilizer photo is used courtesy of the Water Quality Consortium, a cooperative venture between the Washington State Department of Ecology, King County and the Cities of Bellevue, Seattle and Tacoma.

The content is used courtesy of the City of Carlsbad



ONLY RAIN IN THE STORM DRAIN!



City of Imperial Beach
Storm Water Protection Program
825 Imperial Beach Boulevard
Imperial Beach, CA 91932

Storm Water Hotline:
(619) 424-4095



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Lawn & Garden Care



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How can YOU help keep the environment clean?

Having a clean environment is of primary importance for our health and economy. Clean waterways provide commercial opportunities, recreation, fish habitat and add beauty to our landscape. YOU can help keep our creeks, lagoons and ocean clean by applying the following tips:

- Don't blow or rake leaves and other yard waste into the street or gutter.
- Recycle yard waste or start your own compost pile.
- Don't over irrigate. Use drip irrigation, soaker hoses or micro-spray system and water early in the morning.
- If you have a spray head sprinkler system, consider adjusting your watering method to a cycle and soak. Instead of watering for 15 minutes straight, break up the session into 5 minutes intervals allowing water to soak in before the next application.

- Keep irrigation system well maintained and water only when needed to save money and prevent over-watering.
- Use fertilizers and pesticides sparingly.
- Have your soil tested to determine the nutrients needed to maintain a healthy lawn.
- Consider using organic fertilizers - they release nutrients more slowly.
- Leave mulched grass clippings on the lawn to act as natural fertilizer.
- Use pesticides only when absolutely necessary. Use the least toxic product intended to target a specific pest, such as insecticide soaps, boric acid, etc. Always read the label and use only as directed.
- Use predatory insects to control harmful pests when possible.
- Properly dispose of unwanted pesticides and fertilizers at Household Hazardous Waste collection facilities.

For more information on landscape irrigation, please call **(619) 423-8311**.

Master Gardeners

San Diego County has a Master Gardener program through the University of California Cooperative Extension. Master Gardeners can provide good information about dealing with specific pests and plants.

You may call the Master Gardener Hotline at (858) 694-2860 or visit their website at

<http://www.mastergardenerssandiego.org>

The hotline is staffed Monday - Friday, 9 am - 3 pm, by experienced gardeners who are available to answer specific questions. Information from Master Gardeners is free to the public.

